

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL  
HOUSING SERVICES



# ANNUAL COMPLAINTS & SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT

APRIL 2024 - MARCH 2025





# A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

Our annual complaints and service improvement report highlights the importance of these issues to our council tenants, and how our response as a service needs to continue to improve. The Housing Advisory Board discusses our performance on complaints and repairs at every meeting - it is a key corporate objective for Housing Services, and one that all members of the Advisory Board are keen to engage with on behalf of all our tenants from all our communities.

The 'Your Voice' groups, including the dedicated Scrutiny Panel, are vital for how we want Housing Services to continue to improve and crucially learn from all complaints we receive. We have made investment in neighbourhood services, repairs and in the resident experience team at White Moss Road over the last year - these investments are bringing about some positive change and improvements, but we know there is plenty more progress we need to make to ensure all our tenants have a housing service they are more satisfied with and a place they can truly call home.

Our focus for 2025-2026 will be on continuing to improve our repairs service, respond and deal with complaints quicker, and ensure that our communication to all our tenants and residents is much better too

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gavin White". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**COUNCILLOR GAVIN WHITE**

EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND  
DEVELOPMENT, AND CHAIR OF THE  
HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD



# A WORD FROM OUR MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR COMPLAINTS

I am pleased to present this year's Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report, which highlights the continued progress we've made in delivering a more responsive and accountable service to our residents.

It is encouraging to see performance in complaint handling is improving. Complaints are now being managed more efficiently and consistently within policy, ensuring that residents receive timely and fair resolutions. The team's commitment to quality and transparency has been instrumental in driving this positive change.

We've also seen notable improvements in our call centre operations. Thanks to enhanced training and a renewed focus on service standards, the team is now performing strongly against their Service Level Agreements (SLAs). This uplift in performance has contributed to a reduction in the number of forecasted complaints, as more issues are being resolved effectively at first contact.

These improvements reflect our ongoing commitment to learning from feedback, strengthening our services, and putting residents at the heart of everything we do.

**COUNCILLOR PAULA APPLEBY**

MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR  
COMPLAINTS, AND HOUSING  
ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER



# A WORD FROM OUR RESIDENT SCRUTINY PANEL CHAIR

It's been great to see the dedication of MCC Housing in improving the standards across the board, with a strong emphasis on the customer service standards, which is clear from the much improved answering speeds of the call center. Also with the new model for Housing Officers, allowing them to spend more time with residents, in their homes and neighbourhoods.

It is clear from the report that Repairs are still a big issue for residents, with 91.5% of complaints being with regards to them. For the Scrutiny Group, this is a clear indication that we need to scrutinise the repairs process and Equans, along with getting feedback from residents of the main concerns that they have, and working with MCC to study the data they have available.

The priorities for 2025-2026 I feel are much needed basic standards which have been neglected for many years. The Scrutiny Group will be supporting and observing MCC Housing, while watching to see the impact this has on our residents, as-well as pushing and supporting the growth of residents having louder voices in shaping the future.

*Chris Higham*

**CHRIS HIGHAM**

TENANT AND CHAIR OF THE RESIDENT  
SCRUTINY PANEL



## WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT?

The purpose of this report is to ensure our residents know how we are performing, when it comes to handling their complaints when something goes wrong.

It is also an opportunity for us to update residents on the things we have changed and improved, as a direct result of their feedback.

This is crucial as we recognise the need to rebuild trust with our residents.

We will demonstrate how the resident voice, and lived experiences of residents, are influencing the way we work.

Finally we will outline how you can get involved, if you want to join any of our resident led panels, groups, forums or events.

Thank You to all the residents who've helped to review this report, and make it resident-friendly.

# PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW



WE RECEIVED A TOTAL OF **1300 COMPLAINTS**, ACROSS OUR 15,173 HOMES



**960 COMPLAINTS** WERE LOGGED AS '**STAGE ONE COMPLAINTS**'



**340 COMPLAINTS** WERE LOGGED AS '**STAGE TWO COMPLAINTS**', MEANING THE RESIDENT DID NOT ACCEPT THE STAGE 1 OUTCOME



**12 COMPLAINTS** WERE **ESCALATED TO THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN** AND A DETERMINATION REPORT MADE





# 32%

of residents were **satisfied** with MCC Housing Services approach to handling complaints  
(Tenant perception survey 24/25)

# 26

The average **number of days** it took to respond to a complaint

# 276

The number of **compliments** received from residents, about the service they received from MCC

# 0

The number of complaints we **refused** to investigate (as per our Complaints Policy)



# 46.6%

The percentage of Stage 1 complaints that were **completed in timescale**, as per the Complaints Policy

# 88.2%

The percentage of Stage 2 complaints that were **completed in timescale**, as per the Complaints Policy

# 63.3

The number of **Stage 1 complaints received per 1000 homes** managed by MCC Housing Services

# 22.4

The number of **Stage 2 complaints received per 1000 homes** managed by MCC Housing Services

# 91.5%

of Complaints related to  
**property condition and  
Repairs**

# 8,804

The number of **Service Requests**  
logged throughout the year (first  
contact opportunities to fix an  
issue)

# 1.25%

of Complaints related to  
**Customer Services**

# 7.25%

of Complaints related to  
**Neighbourhood** issues, including  
**Anti Social Behaviour, Estates  
and Caretaking services**





# THE ROLE OF THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN

The Housing Ombudsman is an independent service that helps people living in social housing (like council or housing association homes) when they have a complaint about their landlord.

If you complain to your landlord, but are not happy with their answer, you can ask the Ombudsman to look at your case.

They investigate problems like delays with repairs, poor service, or how your landlord handled anti-social behaviour.

The Ombudsman will make one or more (or a combination of) findings in their investigation into your complaint.

Every year we must publish a self-assessment about how we're complying with the code of practice. To see our 2025-26 self-assessment, you can visit our website or contact us for a hard copy to be posted to you

Findings can include;



**No Maladministration** - The landlord has acted fairly and in accordance with its obligations in the tenancy agreement and relevant policies and procedures



**Service Failure** - There is evidence of a minor failing, and action is needed to put this right. Service failure is a form of maladministration



**Maladministration** - There has been a failure which has adversely affected the resident and/or evidence of service failures which have yet to be rectified



**Severe Maladministration** - The most serious failure, where there is evidence of serious detrimental impact on the resident as a result



**Reasonable redress** - There is evidence of maladministration, but the landlord has identified and acknowledged this prior to the Ombudsman investigation and has, on their own initiative, taken steps to put things right

# HOUSING OMBUDSMAN PERFORMANCE

# 12

**Determinations** were made against Manchester City Council

# 34

The total **number of 'findings'** made, from the 12 complaints which were determined. It is common to have multiple findings for one complaint

# 73%

of findings made were classed as **maladministration** (a failure). The national average for Landlords of a similar size was 80%

# £9,121.32

The amount of **compensation** the Ombudsman ordered MCC to pay to residents



# HOUSING OMBUDSMAN PERFORMANCE

# 47

The total number of **orders** made by the Ombudsman (orders are things like: pay compensation, make an apology, change a policy)

# 91%

MCC's **maladministration rate for property related complaints**. This is worse than the national average of 73%

# 100%

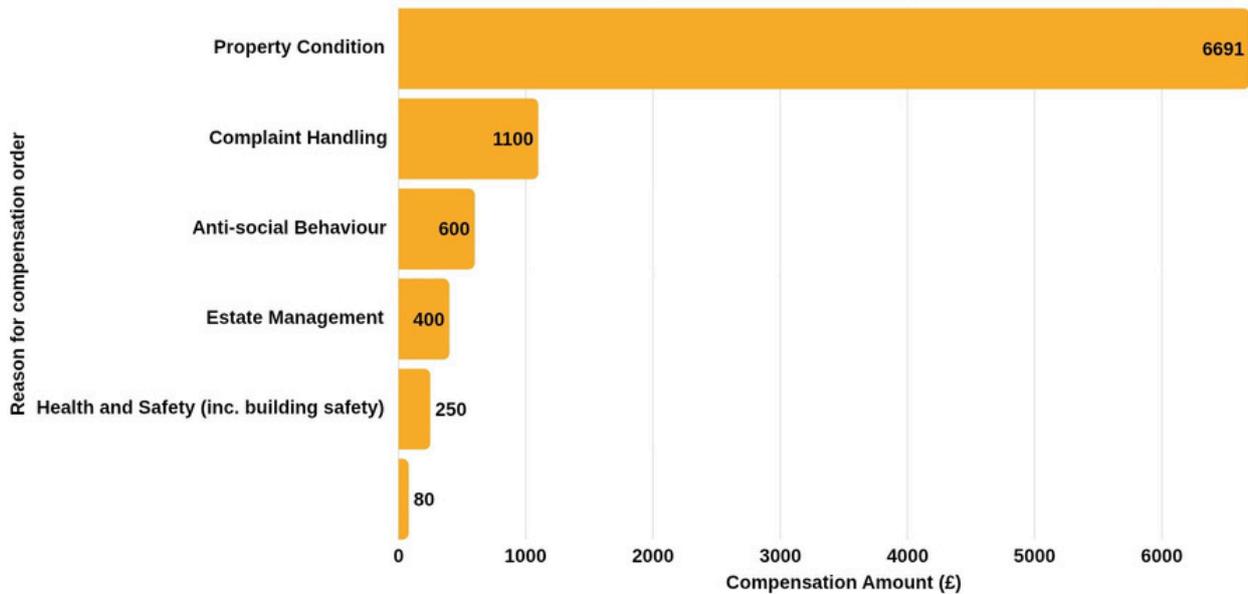
MCC's **compliance** with the Ombudsmans orders

# 67%

MCC's **maladministration rate for complaint handling**. This is better than the national average of 77%



## Compensation ordered (by theme)



# OMBUDSMAN ORDERS

The Housing Ombudsman made 47 orders to MCC last year. These included:

**24**

**Compensation** orders were made, totalling £9,121, a breakdown of this is shown in the graph above

**8**

**Repair** orders were issued, to ensure outstanding works were completed

**1**

**Policy review** was ordered

**5**

**Non repair related specific actions** were ordered

**8**

**Apologies** were ordered to be made to residents

**1**

**Staff training** orders were made, to address where policies had not been followed correctly



## LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

Learning from complaints is essential to fostering a culture of continuous improvement and accountability, as emphasised by the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, which promotes fairness, early resolution, and service enhancement through reflective practice and resident-focused complaint handling.

Here are all the ways MCC has learnt from residents complaints, and made service improvements:

## OUR HOMES & NEIGHBOURHOODS

-  We introduced a 'Clean and Green' team, to provide targeted services to our estates
-  Launched a project to decrease our 'work in progress' (WIP), which has helped us reduce overdue repairs by 30% and cut down the average time residents will wait for a repair
-  Established a dedicated working group to ensure we are ready for the introduction of Awaabs Law in October 2025. The work this group are doing is already having a positive impact on residents who have been experiencing issues with Damp and Mould
-  We have worked with our Repairs Contractor, Equans, to re-design their Customer Service Model. This has seen dedicated roles and teams created, to deal with service issues and complaints more effectively



Increased frontline workers in Neighbourhoods by nearly 40% - ensuring we have dedicated ASB and Safeguarding caseworkers, which frees up more time for Housing Officers to work in their neighbourhoods. This will include carrying out a visit to every resident, every 2-years



Improved re-let times by nearly 30%, when a property becomes vacant, meaning new residents are being housed quicker. We have also launched our 'House to Home' campaign, which ensures every new tenancy starts effectively, until the resident feels settled in their new home! This has included re-designing the Resident Handbook



## OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE OFFER



We completely re-designed our Customer Contact Centre operating model, and established a 'first-line', 'second-line' and 'after care' team, to ensure residents can get the help they need easily. The impact of this re-design has been massively improved answer speeds (under 1-minute on average) and improved satisfaction from residents when they need to contact us



We in-sourced our 'Out of Hours' emergency repairs call centre, meaning these calls are now answered by staff from Manchester City Council, not a third-party. The impact of this is improved answer speeds (under 5 minutes on average) and improved levels of service from colleagues who we have trained, and who can access our 'Housing Hub', to help them identify and respond to the emergency 'right first time'



When things go wrong, and a resident complains, there are occasions where compensation is necessary. This used to take around a month to be paid, so we have changed the process and now manage this within the Resident Experience Team. The impact of this is that compensation is now paid within 10 days on average



We have introduced a 'post-resolution' survey for complaints, which means our Resident Experience Team will follow up with residents who have recently complained, to ensure all agreed actions and follow up work are completed, and that their complaint has been resolved to their satisfaction



When we receive a determination (decision) from the Housing Ombudsman, the relevant managers are required to review the resident journey, and demonstrate how they have improved / will improve processes, training, performance management and outcomes. These reviews are overseen by our Senior Leadership Team and taken very seriously, to ensure learning from complaints is being embedded



Complaint handling times have been unacceptable in 2024-2025 and there has been a big push to clear backlogs, meaning overdue complaints are responded to and resolved. As of August 2025 less than 10% of complaints are overdue, and a new Complaints Service operating model is being introduced. This will see three dedicated 'Complaint Resolution Officers' added to the team. They will manage increasing demand and drive up the standards of resolution, improving resident satisfaction with how their complaint is handled

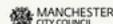


We have responded to residents' low satisfaction rates with our ASB (anti-social behaviour) support service, by; setting up focus groups with residents with lived experiences of ASB; drawing out key themes for dissatisfaction; developing our information for residents when they are experiencing ASB, and by establishing a dedicated 'aftercare' service for people affected by ASB



"I am pleased to see the progress and improvement we have made in this service in recent months, but know there is certainly more we want and need to do to ensure we fulfil our ambition to be a good landlord as a council, and ensure all our residents have a place they are proud of to call home."

**Councillor Gavin White**  
 Executive Member for Housing and Development



Excellent customer service today!  
 The call handler was Bernie, she was so friendly and she rang to rearrange a gas check appointment for my brother's property.  
 Well Done Bernie keep up the good work!



## OUR PEOPLE & PROCESSES



We have developed and made good progress against a 29-point action plan, which was based around learning from deep dives into complex cases and complaints. These actions spanned 'people, processes and performance' and they are aimed at tackling things like; poor communication, lack of ownership, inconsistencies in service delivery and a failure to follow-up on agreed actions



We have delivered more than 100 hours of training to staff in areas such as complaint handling, information recording on systems (so we can easily see information and progress of a case, preventing the need for you to keep explaining your issue) and customer service excellence



12 members of the team completed a qualification in project management principles, meaning they are better skilled to manage improvement projects in their service areas. This is part of our commitment to developing a 'Resident First' culture, where all staff feel empowered to make the changes needed, to best support our residents



We have delivered training to our teams, our Housing Advisory Board and our involved residents, with regards to the Consumer Standards (these are standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing). This helps to ensure we are meeting our obligations as a Social Landlord, and the training helps to empower people to recognise where this may not be being achieved, and informing them of how they can hold MCC to account



## OUR TECHNOLOGY



We have created Neighbourhood dashboards, so we can easily identify hot-spots for things like fly tipping and ASB. This dashboard helps our Housing Officers to monitor their estates better, and tailor their support to the needs of the neighbourhood!



In February 2025 we launched our "Support and Wellbeing Hub", which is a one-stop shop for all things related to support and wellbeing. Residents can now easily access support with; money advice, cost-of-living, domestic abuse, energy advice, benefits support, ASB or abuse, getting into work, safeguarding a vulnerable adult or child, health and wellbeing, reporting hate crime, finding a home or registering for Manchester Move



We have made good progress with implementing 'remote working' for staff, which means our teams can operate more effectively when they are out working on our estates. They can access your information easier, when you need help or support, and they can raise a range of orders for you, such as repairs, ASB reports and service requests. This work underpins our 'resident portal and app', which hasn't launched yet but is due to launch soon. This will allow resident to 'self-serve' (at home, whatever time of day they wish to) and it will give residents better access to their own requests and progress being made



We have established a Resident Reader Group who review and feedback on things like our website, newsletters, reports, policies and digital communications. This group have highlighted challenges using the website which are being fixed currently - this will make the website much easier to navigate and offer a refreshed look and feel. They are also looking at how the resident portal and app is tested and rolled out



We offer residents of North Manchester training, support and equipment to 'Get Online' and benefit from the range of online services. And not just those that MCC offer, we also support people to access other services like banking, food shopping, benefits, employment support, e-learning, skills and training etc. Every year we deliver nearly 1000 hours of training across libraries and community spaces in North Manchester



## LISTENING TO THE RESIDENT VOICE



More than 350 residents helped us to shape our 'Key Performance Indicators' for 2025-2026, by participating in feedback surveys. They influenced us stretching our ASB targets, as they felt we were not striving high enough. Residents also wanted us to introduce a target for online contact, so we set an initial target of 5-working day to respond to emails received via the website, but by October 2025 this will be stretched to 3-working days, to ensure we are continually improving!



We had 3 separate 'Your Voice' groups working on projects in 2024, and the feedback from involved residents is that it wasn't working as seamlessly as it needed to. As such, we worked with residents to re-design the resident engagement groups and we established a dedicated Scrutiny Panel, who co-ordinate and conduct service reviews and make recommendations to our Housing Advisory Board. The first area the group have looked at is Resident Experience and Engagement, and future reviews will inspect all of the services being delivered to residents



Resident satisfaction with complaint handling is very low, so we have set up a ‘Service Excellence Group’ which specifically looks at the resident experience when someone raises a complaint. We work with residents who have recently complained, to hear their experiences and understand what went well, and what needed to improve. We involve colleagues from across different services, to ensure this learning is being utilised in different teams.



Building Safety is an area of focus for MCC, especially where we have residents living in high-rise accommodation (18 metres or higher). To ensure residents living in high-rises are given opportunities to be heard and raise any concerns about safety, we have re-launched our high-rise living forum, with a dedicated section to address any building safety matters. We are also in the process of creating individual ‘resident engagement strategy’ leaflets for every high rise block, to ensure we are meeting the diverse needs of our residents, and fostering a culture of safety and wellbeing in the home



Through our ‘Your Voice Forums’ and other engagement activities, our residents have influenced our Money Advice and Rent policies, and they have told us their thoughts on damp and mould, and how we manage these cases when they happen. They have told us about their lived experiences of either being vulnerable, or supporting someone classed as vulnerable, so we can ensure our support/services are addressing what it is residents really need from us.



As well as these specific groups and forums we have 9 active Tenant and Resident Associations, who we support. We also run regular events and activities, such as summer fun days, parades, roadshows and walkabouts - all of these give us chance to hear from residents. We have recently joined Tpas (formerly TPAS, the Tenant Participation Advisory Service) to ensure we are offering ‘best in sector’ engagement and support to residents. A couple of our involved residents have already attended training, which is supporting them with their scrutiny roles, and we intend to send more residents on this training





## PRIORITIES FOR 2025-2026

Our vision, 'A Place Called Home', is underpinned by three key objectives. These are to provide;

 Resident-led services, putting you at the heart of everything we do

 High-quality housing services and home improvements for secure, warm, sustainable homes

 Welcoming, safe and vibrant neighbourhoods

## HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS

We have set 7 strategic objectives, which all of our core service plans are based around. These are to:



**Deliver a high quality repairs service which meets the needs of residents**



**Ensure our homes comply with all 'Safety and Quality' Standards**



**Improve the quality of our homes and deliver an ambitious capital investment programme**



**Maximise the collection of income, whilst supporting residents adversely affected by the cost of living crisis**



**Reduce the time taken to turnaround our empty homes, minimising the number of people waiting for social housing**



**Make it easy and timely for residents to access our services, and resolve issues, when something goes wrong**



**Implement localised Neighbourhood Plans which deliver safe, vibrant, and well-maintained neighbourhoods where residents feel safe and secure in their homes**

## WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

We hope this report has assured you that MCC Housing Services are listening, and they really care about what it's residents think. If you want to get more involved, or attend any of our open resident forums, please look on our website for more details, or contact our Customer Service Centre (it only takes a minute, on average!)



**[www.mcchousingservices.co.uk/  
get-involved/](http://www.mcchousingservices.co.uk/get-involved/)**



**Call us on  
03000 123 123**



**Visit us in person at  
Whitemoss Road**